

ESTABLISHING AN EMERGENCY VEHICLE DRIVER/OPERATOR PROGRAM

Executive Analysis of Fire Service Operations in Emergency Management

By: Mark R. Ayers
Functional Area Manager
Range Complex Fire Department
Las Vegas, Nevada

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ABSTRACT

Many fire departments within the United States do not utilize a nationally validated vehicle training program to certify their driver/operators. With the ever-present threat of increased liability settlements due to operator negligence, fire service organizations must re-examine the overall effectiveness of current emergency vehicle operations. The problem for the Range Complex Fire Department is that the organization does not have a current emergency vehicle driver/operator program and this may result in increased exposure to operational liability, damage to emergency response vehicles, and/or injury to department personnel. The purpose of this research was to identify and evaluate the issues involved in developing an emergency vehicle driver/operator program.

This study uses the descriptive method of research and seeks to answer the following questions:

- 1) What national or federal standards cover emergency vehicle driver/operator training, if any?
- 2) What training guidelines must be identified to validate an emergency vehicle driver/operator program?
- 3) What operational guidelines and documentation must be implemented to mitigate potential legal problems resulting from emergency vehicle operations?

A literature review was conducted to identify national or federal standards that support an emergency vehicle driver/operator program, training guidelines that exist to

validate an operator program, and the documentation that is required to prevent potential lawsuits.

Research results indicated a number of standards associated with emergency vehicle driver/operator programs. National Fire Protection Association Standards 1002 and 1500 indicated that fire department driver/operators must not only be licensed to drive emergency vehicles but are required to complete an approved training program. Moreover, not only is the operator expected to attain certification but he/she is directly responsible for the safe and prudent operation of the vehicle under all conditions. Literature reviews indicated that a comprehensive driver training program should be mandatory for all fire department driver/operators and certified training must include classroom instruction, operational training, a study of applicable rules and regulations, and extensive documentation. The research clearly pointed out that documented training is the **only** way to prevent charges of negligence in the event of an accident/incident.

It was recommended that the Range Complex Fire Department develop and implement an emergency vehicle driver/operator course that meets NFPA Standards 1002 and 1500, requires all entry level Engineer/Operators to complete a training program before allowing operation of emergency vehicles, provides personnel with annual recertification, and institutes a comprehensive documentation plan that incorporates classroom and operational training. Furthermore, a stronger vehicle preventive maintenance program must be developed and a good defensive driving module implemented.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	i
INTRODUCTION	1
BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE.....	2
LITERATURE REVIEW	4
<u>INTRODUCTION</u>	4
<i>National and Federal Standards</i>	4
<i>Training</i>	5
<i>Litigation and Documentation</i>	7
<u>LITERATURE REVIEW SUMMARY</u>	10
PROCEDURES	10
<u>LITERATURE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</u>	10
<u>SURVEY METHODOLOGY</u>	11
<i>Population</i>	11
<i>Instrumentation</i>	11
<i>Assumptions and Limitations</i>	12
RESULTS	13
DISCUSSION.....	16
RECOMMENDATIONS	20
REFERENCES	22
APPENDIX A.....	24

Introduction

Get the big picture. Let the people know you are there. Keep your eyes moving. Leave yourself an out. Aim high. Do any of these statements bring back memories? Probably. If you participated in a driver training course in high school then your instructor probably drilled these tidbits into your head. Can these same time-tested driving principles be applied to current emergency operations? You bet they can. Unfortunately, there are many emergency vehicle driver/operators who either don't remember some of these basic driving tenets or who have chosen to conveniently forget them.

Today's fire service is experiencing a number of serious operational problems when it comes to emergency driving. Many departments do not have a formalized driver/operator training program and this, coupled with the ever-present threat of increased liability settlements, dictates the need to re-examine the overall effectiveness of current emergency vehicle operations.

The Range Complex Fire Department (RCFD) briefly implemented an emergency vehicle operator course in the late 1980's. The problem that inspired this paper is that the RCFD does not have a current emergency vehicle driver/operator program and this may result in increased liability to the organization.

The purpose of this research was to identify and evaluate the issues involved in developing an emergency vehicle driver/operator program.

The descriptive method of research was used for this paper. The research consisted of a literature review and a survey of fire departments from across the country.

The survey was used to assess the current status of emergency vehicle driver/operator programs within other fire departments. The following research questions were utilized in the preparation of this paper:

- 1) What national or federal standards cover emergency vehicle driver/operator training, if any?
- 2) What training guidelines must be identified to validate an emergency vehicle driver/operator program?
- 3) What operational guidelines and documentation must be implemented to mitigate potential legal problems resulting from emergency vehicle operations?

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

During the late 1980's the RCFD experimented with a nationally recognized driver training program. This particular program had an approved format to properly train shift personnel in the safe operation of emergency vehicles. The problem; however, was that the training division did not put any effort into the program. This lack of commitment by staff and line officers, which was readily observed by shift personnel, resulted in a lackadaisical attitude and the quick collapse of a good program.

Over the course of the past few months the RCFD has questioned the lack of a formal emergency vehicle driver/operator training program. The department does not currently have the means of properly certifying its personnel to operate emergency vehicles. It was also apparent that this lack of formal and documented training could result

in increased accidents, increased exposure to operational liability, damage to emergency response vehicles, and injury to department/civilian personnel.

The RCFD is a federal fire department located in Nevada. The initial mission of the RCFD was to provide only aircraft firefighting and structural fire protection. Over the years the department has evolved to provide many additional operational services such as hazardous materials response and mitigation, medical response and transport, confined space rescue, and high angle/industrial rescue. Additionally, a fire prevention bureau has been added and provides for plans review, fire inspections, extinguisher maintenance and education, public fire education, and arson investigation services.

It is understood that information such as population served, when the fire department was organized and other information about the organization is generally discussed in this section. Due to security constraints, this information cannot be discussed in this paper.

This research problem is directly related to Chapter 10 of the ***Executive Analysis of Fire Service Operations in Emergency Management*** student manual. This course was presented as part of the Executive Fire Officer Program at the National Fire Academy. Chapter 10 covers the legal ramifications of various operations within the fire service. As the manual notes, court rulings/opinions are dictating the future of many fire departments across the United States.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The literature review is sub-divided into three main parts, one for each of the issues covered by the research questions. The purpose of the literature review is to determine what has been written about the issues.

National and Federal Standards

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has compiled the most complete information regarding emergency vehicle operations. NFPA, Standard 1500, ***Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program, 1992***, provides a wealth of information as indicated by the following sections:

- ◆ (Section 3-4.1) All members who engage in emergency operations shall be trained commensurate with their duties and responsibilities. Training shall be as frequent as necessary to ensure that members can perform their assigned duties in a safe and competent manner but shall not be less frequent than specified in this section.
- ◆ (Section 4-2.1) Fire department vehicles shall be operated only by members who have successfully completed an approved driver training program or by student drivers who are under the supervision of a qualified driver.
- ◆ (Section 4-2.3) Drivers of fire department vehicles shall be directly responsible for the safe and prudent operation of the vehicles under all conditions.

NFPA 1002, ***Standard for Fire Department Vehicle Driver/Operators, 1992***, section 1-3.1, augments NFPA 1500 by adding “the fire department vehicle driver/operators shall be licensed to drive all vehicles they are expected to operate”.

Wilbur (1995) pointed out that there are a number of guidelines, both national and federal, which mandate the need for emergency vehicle operations. The National Fire Protection Association publishes professional standards. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) reports on fire apparatus accidents and all related driving incidents. And finally, case law has a major impact in determining how an organization will train its apparatus driver/operators.

Training

Federal guidelines have been established to mitigate potential apparatus accidents. These guidelines emphasized thorough training of apparatus driver/operators and the development of safe driving habits.

Louis Klein (1986) identified a number of concerns when an emergency vehicle accident occurred. He stated that the impact of an accident potentially affects the driver, other personnel on the rig, and the public. Brown (1995) followed this line of reasoning by stating that the most important element in firefighting is a safe response. Everybody in the fire service knows that you have to get to the scene before an operation can begin. According to Brown, not getting there results in “the erosion of public confidence” and puts the department in the position of having to defend a potential lawsuit (p. 16).

The best way to protect a department against potential litigation is to implement a thorough vehicle training course. Rossman (1994) underlined the need for a bona fide program concentrating on operator safety, classroom assignments, written exams, operational hands-on experience, and a strong vehicle maintenance program.

Deputy Director Frederick Piechota (1990) advocated the use of a proactive approach to the vehicle driving program. He contrasted the specialized training given to a newly promoted company officer versus the firefighter who is elevated to the driver/operator position. Many departments do not have a formalized operator program and this often results in needless/unwarranted accidents.

Paramedic Thom Dick (1980) attempted to analyze what it takes to reduce the chances of hitting a pedestrian/vehicle or getting hit by another vehicle. According to Dick, good driving should be the result of a solid training program, good reflexes, knowing the equipment, being comfortable with the response area, and having a good attitude about your skills. Carlson (1993) followed this line of thought in his article by noting that emergency vehicle operators must be trained in defensive driving, qualified/authorized to operate an emergency vehicle, clearly briefed on Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's), and aware of local ordinances. He further stated that all personnel must be taught the rules of emergency driving and that documentation of all training is the key to a successful program.

Michael Young (1993) emphasized the need for a balanced emergency driving program. He stressed that, in 1991, "nearly a full 25% of all firefighter deaths occurred while responding to, or returning from, the emergency scene" (p.80). He stated that

emergency response, non-emergency response, safety considerations, terrain, intersections, and a hands-on driving program should be included in a formal training course. Stout (1987) reflected in his article that the key to emergency vehicle training is understanding the relationship between arriving at the destination in a timely fashion and arriving safely. He is adamant that the vehicle operator must avoid situations that make an accident likely and must develop the “skills and awareness required to reliably anticipate and avoid such situations” (p. 80). Klein (1986) echoed Stout by declaring that a working emergency “does not relieve the operator of the responsibility for the safety of all other users of the streets” (p.16).

Litigation and Documentation

Liability issues are the driving force behind emergency vehicle operations. Michael Wilbur (1994) related that lawsuits are being filed at an unprecedented rate and liability judgments awarded in higher and higher amounts. He pointed out that any department which feels they are immune to lawsuits must reassess their false sense of security. Rossman (1994) followed this line of reasoning by stating that the act of driving/operating an emergency vehicle will have the greatest chance of involving a department in a lawsuit.

Legal issues involving emergency vehicle operations cannot be glossed over. Chief Young (1993) conveyed that huge monetary awards are being given on a continuous basis. Young goes on to add that everyone involved in the selection, training, and certification of emergency vehicle operators must be aware of potential litigation due to nonperformance and incomplete training programs. Furthermore, he contended that understanding the

importance of liability issues will contribute to the improvement of emergency vehicle operations.

Apparatus safety and potential lawsuits go hand-in-hand. According to Kroger (1987) many emergency vehicle operators felt they were immune to lawsuits when traveling under flashing lights and siren. Driving instructor Kroger believed that the fine print of the law takes away those rights. He goes on to say that documented training is the only way to prevent a charge of negligence and nonperformance.

Many departments remarked that they cannot afford to hold emergency vehicle operation courses. Wilbur (1994) maintained that a “department can’t afford not to hold such a class” (p.25). He asserted that the large liability awards being given out will dictate the need for a certified operator program.

Brown (1995) also emphasized the importance of having a strong documented emergency vehicle driver/operator program to preclude litigation. He pointed out that potential litigation, and the impact it may have on operational requirements, will hinge on how closely a department follows standard operating procedures and national guidelines.

Training Officer Wilbur (1995) warned departments that if they do not have standard operating procedures for emergency vehicle training, do not document training, and are involved in a lawsuit.....“you need to bring your checkbook and ask how much it will cost” (p.22). In addition, he emphasized that it doesn’t matter if a department adheres to NFPA guidelines or not. Litigation will follow the line of reasoning that the organization *should* meet the minimum requirements as established by national standards. It is not a question

of guilt or innocence—it is an issue of “deep pockets” and a perceived endless supply of local/state/federal cash.

The need for a formal, documented vehicle operator program cannot be overemphasized. A validated and nationally recognized course will avert potential lawsuits while simultaneously training the operator to nationally acceptable standards.

The fire service must realize that the legal system no longer views the fire department as a “hands-off” entity. Wilbur (1994) warned departments that they must have a formal driver training program to preclude litigation. In his article he cited a letter from an insurance company that outlined the points that need to be covered to prevent potential litigation:

- All drivers and driver candidates will be subject to periodic medical evaluation.
- Four hours of classroom training will be required for all driver training candidates.
- Periodic classroom training for experienced operators should be performed at the discretion of the Chief.
- Driver candidates should have sufficient hands-on training to effectively demonstrate their capability of handling emergency vehicles (10 hours minimum). Experienced drivers should receive annual retraining, based on their hands-on emergency driving activity.
- All driver candidates will meet the requirements of a training program established by the local emergency service organization. The training program

should include, but not be limited to, the following: preventive maintenance, record keeping, legal requirements, defensive driving and driving under unusual circumstances.

- A Department of Motor Vehicle check should be done on each individual every three years. This report is to be secured from local sources by the fire district.

(p. 22).

Literature Review Summary

The purpose of this research was to identify and evaluate the issues involved in developing an emergency vehicle driver/operator course. The literature review was critical in identifying areas of concern pertaining to driver education, the legal/documentation aspects of a vehicle program, and the numerous components that comprise a nationally validated training curriculum. The literature clearly identified federal guidelines that should drive a formal emergency vehicle driver/operator program. Moreover, the legal implications of not developing/maintaining a progressive program were clearly spelled out. The information found in the review of the literature will be especially useful in formulating the recommendations section of this paper.

PROCEDURES

Literature Research Methodology

The research began by locating books, professional journals, and Executive Fire Officer Program (EFOP) research papers that related to the topic of emergency vehicle operations. An initial computer search was conducted in September 1997 at the Learning

Research Center located at the National Emergency Training Center in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Additional research was conducted in October 1997 at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Survey Methodology

Population

Fire departments from across the United States were the target of the survey questionnaire. The mailing list was generated from past Executive Fire Officer Programs and various training classes.

Instrumentation

The purpose of this survey was to identify and evaluate any current emergency vehicle operator courses being implemented within U.S. fire departments.

- Question #1 asked for the size of their (respondents) department (paid members).
- Question #1A asked for the size of their department (volunteer members).
- Question #2 asked if their department trains emergency vehicle operators to NFPA 1002 guidelines.
- Question #3 asked if they require a formal training program for their emergency vehicle operators.
- Question #4 asked if their program provides for annual recertification.

- Question #5 asked, if their answer to question #4 was “No”, how often is recertification accomplished.
- Question #6 asked if their department supports specific areas of driver/operator training.
- Question #7 asked what division/person is in charge of their emergency vehicle operator program.
- Question #8 asked if their department covers any of the legal areas associated with an emergency vehicle training program.
- Question #9 refers back to question #3. If their department does not have a formal emergency vehicle program then how do they evaluate and certify their personnel?

The questionnaire was reviewed by members of the Range Complex Fire Department. Some modifications to the format of the questionnaire were made. A copy of the survey is displayed in Appendix A.

Assumptions and Limitations

It is assumed that only knowledgeable individuals responded to the surveys and that they did so honestly.

The survey provides representation from fire departments located throughout the United States. No statistical analysis was made to determine the margin of error in the survey results.

RESULTS

Answers to Research Questions

Research Question #1: What national or federal standards cover emergency vehicle driver/operator training, if any?

National Fire Protection Association Standards 1002 and 1500 both indicated that fire department driver/operators must not only be licensed to drive emergency vehicles but are required to complete an approved training program. Moreover, not only is the operator expected to attain certification but he/she is directly responsible for the safe and prudent operation of the vehicle under all conditions.

Survey question #2 indicated that fully eighty-two percent (18 of 22) of the respondents train their driver/operators to guidelines established by NFPA Standard 1002. Of the remaining eighteen percent (4 of 22) who did not require this standard, comments ranged from “it isn’t important enough to worry about” to “it’s under consideration”.

Research Question #2: What training guidelines must be identified to validate an emergency vehicle driver/operator program?

Literature review indicated that a comprehensive driver training program should be mandatory for all fire departments. A certified vehicle driver/operator training program must include classroom instruction, operational training, and a study of applicable local/state/federal rules and regulations.

Survey question #3 referred to the requirement of having an approved training program. Eighty-two percent (18 of 22) of the departments required a formal

driver/operator training course. Of the four respondents who said they did not have a program, all but one pointed out that a review was currently being conducted to establish new procedures.

Survey question #4 asked if their formal driver/operator training program provided for annual recertification. Only twenty-two percent (5 of 22) of the departments indicated they had a program for recertification. When the remaining respondents (78%) were asked to clarify their “No” answer, most suggested they either had ‘something’ in place or they just did not require any type of recertification. One respondent claimed they only recertified when “there was an accident”.

Survey question #6 was posed to determine what, if any, operational programs were supported within their emergency vehicle driver/operator course. Eighty-two percent (18 of 22) replied that they concentrated on vehicle operations and the law as well as having a vehicle/apparatus inspection program. Seventy-two to seventy-seven percent pointed out that dynamics/physical forces and apparatus driving were important to their respective training programs. Of the remaining topics, sixty-three percent (14 of 22) of the departments centered their training on driver skills, fifty-four percent (12 of 22) spent considerable time working on handling unusual circumstances, and forty-five percent (10 of 22) of the respondents noted they trained heavily on apparatus route selection. The results of having a strong emergency vehicle driver/operator training program were detailed in the literature review portion of this study.

Research Question #3: What operational guidelines and documentation must be implemented to mitigate potential legal problems resulting from emergency vehicle operations?

The results presented in this section relate to potential legal issues when emergency vehicle driver/operators are not properly trained. Research revealed that the court system does not look favorably upon a department that has no formal training program and does not properly train its driver/operators. An area of great concern, as revealed within the literature review, is that a good vehicle program must meet the minimum guidelines of both local, state, and federal jurisdictions while incorporating extensive documentation.

Lawyers, courts, and the insurance industry are all sending a message to the fire service and the significance cannot be overlooked. As the research literature clearly pointed out, documented training is the **only** way to prevent charges of negligence in the event of an accident/incident.

Survey question #8 asked if the respondents conducted any extensive documented training. Eighty-six percent (19 of 22) replied that they documented classroom and operational training. Eighty-two percent (18 of 22) indicated that record keeping was an important criteria and seventy-seven percent (17 of 22) said they documented vehicle preventive maintenance programs. Only 50-55% of the surveyed departments taught legal requirements, conducted periodic medical evaluations, or held defensive driving schools. And, surprisingly, less than thirty percent (6 of 22) of those surveyed conducted a Department of Motor Vehicle check on their driver/operators every three years. In addition,

only twenty-seven percent (6 of 22) of the respondents indicated they performed any type of documented annual recertification training.

DISCUSSION

The fire service is not obligated to abide by NFPA standards. It is readily apparent; nevertheless, that recent court decisions have recognized NFPA standards as an industry benchmark and organizations are expected to adhere to its basic guidelines.

Eighty-two percent (18 of 22) of the survey respondents indicated they train their vehicle operators to NFPA Standard 1002 while fully eighteen percent (4 of 22) said they did not observe this guideline. Whether a coincidence or not, of the four departments replying they did not follow Standard 1002, two had staffs of less than 100 personnel and two had departments that exceeded 500 members. Conclusions? Although the sample survey was modest I would have to say that, based on experience and conversations, the smaller departments do not have the funds or personnel to maintain this particular standard and the larger departments have their own methods of training their driver/operators.

The research identified three areas that need to be addressed when developing a validated emergency vehicle driver/operator course: legal ramifications, emergency vehicle training, and documentation.

Research suggested that fire departments understand there are no positive public reactions to an apparatus accident involving its citizens. In fact, recent history has demonstrated that entire departments have been disbanded and municipalities have

struggled to pay court awards due to driver/operator negligence. As Wilbur (1994) succinctly put it:

We have taken people and put them behind the wheel of fire apparatus without the knowledge of their rights and obligations under the law. How do I know? When I teach my EVOC [Emergency Vehicle Operator Class] class, I have students with 30, 35 even 40 years of experience as emergency vehicle operators and, when I cover the vehicle and traffic law, some sit there with a look of disbelief and others mutter, "I didn't know that." (p. 24).

In my opinion, many departments feel they are "hands-off" from the court system. Nothing could be further from the truth. Lawyers are constantly evaluating the fire service and they are doing it with our own national guidelines and reference materials. The fire service is not immune to large legal settlements and, more likely than not, this monetary compensation is being driven simply due to the fact that we are **not** doing our job right. My position on this issue is similar to that of Rossman (1994), Brown (1995), and Wilbur (1995).

Subsequent research suggested that instituting a comprehensive driver/operator training program was a minimum requirement for validating an emergency vehicle operator course. This training must reflect more than just "stick time"—it needs to involve operational training augmented by hours of classroom study. Department members should not be allowed to operate any emergency vehicle based simply on their length of

employment or their word that “yes, I’ve driven this before”. Members must be required to complete an apparatus course and become certified for this function.

The survey results revealed that many departments instituted comprehensive training within the emergency vehicle driver/operator field: ninety-five percent (21 of 22) of the respondents indicated they had a formal training program but only twenty-two percent (5 of 22) provided for annual recertification. Once again, referring to the literature review by Rossman (1994), not only should a new driver/operator receive extensive initial training but this individual must be required to recertify every few years. It was extremely interesting to note that, when asked to provide a recertification timetable, thirteen percent (3 of 22) of the respondents indicated they recertify annually, thirteen percent (3 of 22) do not require recertification, thirteen percent (3 of 22) said their program is currently under review, eleven percent (2 of 22) stated they accomplished it biannually and one program even went so far as to maintain they only provided training when “an incident occurred”. Since the greatest chance of being involved in a lawsuit arises from the operation of an emergency vehicle, it is my belief that vehicle training should be detailed, practical, thorough, and intensive. My position on this issue is, once again, very similar to that of Rossman (1994), Wilbur (1994), Piechota (1990), Klein (1986), and Brown (1995).

Of the ninety-five percent (21 of 22) of the respondents who had a formal training program, most displayed a broad array of training modules. The survey showed eighty-two percent (18 of 22) of the departments having both an emergency vehicle operation/law section as well as a vehicle/apparatus inspection module. Moreover, over sixty percent

had a driver skills exam, an apparatus driving test, and a section designed to test handling characteristics of a vehicle while performing under unusual situations.

The literature review supported the need for a deep and varied training program. Both Wilbur (1994) and Klein (1986) pointed out that emergency vehicle driver/operators must be aware of their surroundings, have extensive knowledge of their vehicles, and rely on training when situations became rough. A good driver/operator is not born into the job—he/she acquires the necessary skills through practice, experience, and a quality training program.

As Klein (1986) pointed out in his article, the driver training section within many fire departments tend to be the least important and the least popular of most operational functions. So it is with great interest to note that, as previously mentioned, many of the lawsuits filed against fire departments involve vehicle operations. And, as Wilbur (1995) candidly pointed out, “to those who say, “I can’t afford to hold a class,” I reply that if you look at the large liability awards being given out, you can’t afford **not** to hold such a class” (p. 22).

Virtually all of the authors cited within this research agreed that documentation is the primary ingredient missing from most driver/operator training courses. After conducting an analysis of the returned surveys I would have to strongly agree with the research literature.

Eighty-six percent (19 of 22) of the survey respondents held documented classroom and operational training. Eighty-two percent (18 of 22) kept records while seventy-seven percent (17 of 22) maintained a file on preventive maintenance programs. Only fifty percent of all respondents reviewed and documented local/state/federal driving guidelines,

held periodic medical evaluations, and documented defensive driving techniques.

Furthermore, only twenty-seven percent (6 of 22) conducted a Department of Motor Vehicle check every three to four years and fully seventy-seven percent (17 of 22) did not maintain any documentation on any type of recertification. As Young (1993) clearly pointed out in his article, trying to defend an Engineer/Operator in a court of law, without documented training, is next to impossible. At best, your organization will come away with a black eye. At worst, your department will be short a couple of million dollars.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the late 1980's the Range Complex Fire Department experimented with a nationally recognized driver/operator training program. The problem that inspired this paper is that the RCFD training division did not fully support the program and this resulted in a lackadaisical attitude by shift personnel. The purpose of this paper was to identify and evaluate the issues involved in developing an emergency vehicle driver/operator course. Based on this premise and the research results, the following recommendations are aimed specifically at the Range Complex Fire Department.

- The RCFD must develop and implement an emergency vehicle driver/operator course that meets NFPA 1500, ***Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program, 1992***, Sections 3-4.1, 4-2.1, and 4-2.3; and NFPA 1002, ***Standard for Fire Department Vehicle Driver/Operators, 1992***, section 1-3.1.

Furthermore, this training program must include specific needs applicable to the local/state/federal jurisdiction of the RCFD.

- The RCFD must require all entry level Engineer/Operators to complete the training program before allowing operation of emergency vehicles.
- This training program must provide for annual recertification. It is imperative that emergency vehicle driver/operators maintain their operational readiness and this can only be accomplished by recurring annual training and periodic evaluation/certification.
- And finally, the RCFD must develop a comprehensive documentation plan that incorporates classroom, operational, and recertification training. A stronger vehicle preventive maintenance program must be developed and a good defensive driving module implemented.

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APPENDIX A

Emergency Vehicle Driver/Operator Survey

The Fire Service has considered the training of driver/operators to be an important aspect of everyday operations. This survey, which looks hard at emergency vehicle operations, is being conducted as part of the Executive Fire Officer Program within the National Fire Academy. I would appreciate your cooperation in the completion of this questionnaire and guarantee complete confidentiality.

Please return this survey no later than 1 December, 1997. I have provided a pre-addressed, stamped envelope for your convenience.

Thanks for your help and if you would like the results of this paper, or the paper itself, please feel free to call me at (702) 382-9051 ext. 5-3221 (Mark Ayers, Manager/Fire Department).

1. Size of your department (paid members):

☐ Less than 50 personnel ☐ 51-100 ☐ 101-500 ☐ More than 500

1A. Size of your department (volunteer members):

☐ Less than 50 personnel ☐ 51-100 ☐ 101-500 ☐ More than 500

2. Does your department train your emergency vehicle operators to the guidelines established by NFPA 1002: Standard For Fire Apparatus Driver/Operator Professional Qualifications? ☐ Yes ☐ No

3. Does your department require a formal training program for your emergency vehicle operators? ☐ Yes ☐ No (If "No", go to question #9)

4. Does this program provide for annual re-certification? ☐ Yes ☐ No

5. If your answer to #4 was "No", then how often is re-certification accomplished?

(CONTINUE SURVEY ON BACK SIDE)

6. Please indicate if your department program supports any of the following areas:

Emergency Vehicle Operation and the Law
 Vehicle/Apparatus Dynamics/Physical Forces
 Vehicle/Apparatus Inspection Process
 Apparatus Route Selection
 Handling Unusual Situations
 Apparatus Driving (off-street, day and night operation)
 Driver Skills (written & practical performance exam)

7. What branch of your department is in charge of your emergency vehicle operator course?

8. Lawyers, courts, and the insurance industry are all sending a message to the fire service: Train your drivers to safely operate your vehicles. Please indicate if your department covers any of the following points in your emergency vehicle training program:

Periodic Medical Evaluations for your Driver/Operator(s)
 Documented Classroom Training
 Documented Operational Training
 Documented Annual Recertification Training
 Documented Preventive Maintenance Program
 Record Keeping
 Legal Requirements (review of all local/state/federal driving guidelines)
 Documented Defensive Driving
 A Department of Motor Vehicle Check at least every 3 years

9. Since your department has no formal training for emergency vehicle operators, how do you certify your personnel?

THANK YOU